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3 bills aim at curbing the CIA

House examining foreign activities

By Alfonso Chardy
Inquirer Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON — Three separate efforts are under way in the House to curb the ability of the CIA to carry out or support covert actions against other governments.

President Reagan and CIA Director William J. Casey already are lobbying members of the House Select Committee on Intelligence against one of the proposals, a bill by committee chairman Edward P. Boland (D., Mass.) that would halt covert CIA support for guerrilla forces fighting against the leftist Sandinista government of Nicaragua.

Today the committee will take up the Boland bill, which also would establish an overt \$50 million fund to help friendly countries combat illegal arms trafficking for insurgent groups in Central America.

The legislation would also amend the congressional resolution governing the current budget. That resolution contains an amendment written by Boland and adopted in December that prohibits the use of federal funds for the purpose of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government or provoking a military confrontation between Nicaragua and neighboring Honduras. Some members of Congress have accused the Reagan administration of violating that restriction.

Boland's new measure would cut off all funds for the Nicaragua operation and give the CIA 45 days to phase out its support for the guerrilla group, the Nicaraguan Democratic Force.

Also, a proposal to give Congress veto power over all covert CIA operations was contained in legislation introduced yesterday by Rep. Wyche Fowler Jr. (D., Ga.). He is chairman of the Intelligence Committee's oversight and evaluation subcommittee and is one of those who accuses the administration of violating the Boland amendment.

And the House Foreign Affairs Committee will consider later this week or next week another related proposal. It is a bill offered by Rep. Michael D. Barnes (D., Md.), chairman of the subcommittee on western hemisphere affairs, which would allow covert operations only if approved by a joint resolution of Congress. The subcommittee approved the Barnes bill two weeks ago.

Fowler's proposal for congressional veto power represents the first attempt at major reform of congressional intelligence oversight methods since 1974, when Congress — after an investigation that disclosed some CIA abuses — required the CIA to notify Congress of existing covert activities. Until then, U.S. intelligence branches essentially operated without congressional controls.

President Reagan, on the advice of Casey, summoned Boland and five other Intelligence Committee members to the White House on Tuesday and begged them not to shut down the Nicaraguan operation.

The covert action involves CIA and other U.S. support for armed Nicaraguan exiles of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, who are already fighting within their country against the Sandinista government.

According to congressional sources, the intelligence panels authorized \$19.9 million for fiscal 1983 to finance the operation, including about \$3 million to fund, equip and train the insurgent force. Casey reportedly asked for more funds for fiscal 1984, which begins Oct. 1, perhaps up to \$25 million, to continue financing the operation.

The new CIA budget requests are being debated by the House and Senate panels, and members in both have drafted resolutions aimed at eliminating the funds because they feel that the CIA misled the committees and actively sought to overthrow the Sandinista government.

In announcing his bill to curb covert action, Fowler said yesterday on the House floor that the issue "raises again the question of the adequacy of the current system when and under what kind of controls covert actions should be undertaken."

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